The Dataset

an HMIS user-community newsletter for HPRP Providers

Lessons Learned From 1st Quarter Report

The Department of Commerce learned some important lessons as we prepared to submit to HUD the Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) for the first quarter of service (October 1-December 31). This edition of The Dataset contains a synopsis of the lessons learned in the process of assisting HPRP contractors throughout the State to prepare their data for submission to HUD. If you have any questions about the information here, please contact any of the HMIS Technical Assistance Team members listed at the end of this newsletter.

Housing Status At Entry

The answer you select for the first entry question on the Program Entry page is an important one. Choosing 'Literally Homeless' tells us that you are providing Rapid Rehousing Assistance to a client. Either of the 'At Risk of Losing Housing' options indicates you are providing Prevention Assistance. Here's a recap of HUD's definitions for these responses:

Literally homeless includes people who are:

- sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation or an emergency shelter,

- sleeping in a hospital or other institution if they were in a place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to entering the institution,

- graduating or timing-out of a transitional housing program for any reason, OR
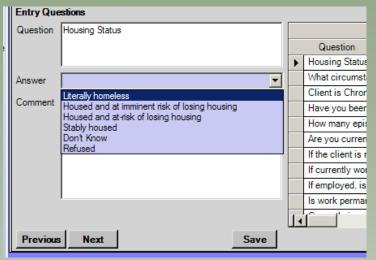
- a victim of domestic violence.

At imminent risk of losing housing includes people who are:

- being evicted from a private dwelling (including housing provided by family or friends),

- being discharged from a hospital or other institution, OR

- living in a house that has been condemned by housing officials as not fit for human habitation AND

- have no appropriate subsequent housing options, AND

- lack the financial resources and support networks needed to immediately obtain other housing or remain in their existing housing.

At-risk of losing housing includes people who are not in immediate danger of losing their housing but who are:

- in their own housing or "doubled up" with friends or relatives, or

- are at-risk of losing housing due to high housing costs, conflict, or other problems AND

- lack the resources and support networks needed to maintain their current housing.

Remember: HUD does not allow the selection of 'Stably Housed', 'Don't Know', or 'Refused' in HPRP!

The Housing Status question is the only way for Commerce to know whether you are providing Prevention Assistance or Rapid Rehousing Assistance. See the list at left for HUD's definitions of the 3 Housing Status options allowed under HPRP.

How to Keep From Being Bothered By the Department of Commerce

Here's a list of data-entry rules of thumb that are sure to keep us off your backs:

- Before enrolling anybody in a program, first enter all family members in Central Intake; don't forget to add income to any household members who have income (this includes non-cash benefits)

- When enrolling a family in HPRP, be sure to enroll *all* members of the family at the same time

- Be sure to answer all questions for all family members on both the Program Entry page and Program Exit page

- Only the head-of-household should be given services in HPRP

- Every 3 months, update each household's income. Then be sure to take a new snapshot to create an historical record of income changes. See Program Guidelines, pg. 19 for details.

- Be sure to record Risk Factors in the 'Comments' field on the Program Entry page (See page 2 for further instructions)

- Enter client data as soon as possible after collection to avoid clients not being counted in quarterly reports

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Download **Program Guidelines** at Commerce's website:
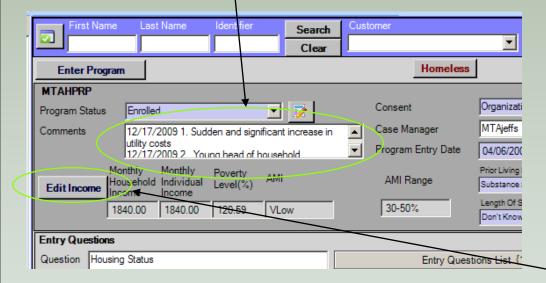
www.commerce.wa.gov/hprp

Don't let Risk-Factors Come Back to Haunt You!

We will be checking periodically to see that risk-factors are being recorded in HMIS properly. See pages 6-9 of the Program Guidelines for exact details on how to record risk-factors as well as the list of qualifying risk-factors. Here are the basics:

<u>All clients</u> receiving services under HPRP must meet both of the following circumstances: (1) no appropriate subsequent housing options have been identified; and (2) the household lacks the financial resources and support networks needed to obtain immediate housing or remain in its existing housing

<u>Clients receiving Prevention Assistance</u> must also meet **2** additional risk-factors from a list of 13 options to receive up to 3 months assistance; additional assistance requires reassessment of risk-factors. **All of these risk-factors must be recorded in HMIS!** (*see below*)

<u>Clients receiving Rapid-Rehousing Assistance</u> must also meet 1 additional risk-factor from a list of 5 options listed on pages 8-9. **This additional risk-factor must be recorded in HMIS!** (*see below*)

Updating Client Income

HUD requires service providers to update client income **every three months**. Remember that HMIS is built so that the demographic data in Central Intake is intended to be 'real-time' data; in other words, it should change as the clients circumstances change (for example, income, marital status, educational status, or veteran status).

An historical record is kept of changing information in a client's record using the Snapshot system. When you enter a client into a program or exit them from a program, a snapshot is taken automatically of <u>all</u> data in Central Intake for that household.

You can take as many snapshots as you want in order to capture a history of a client's changing circumstances. HMIS will always use the first and last snapshot as program entry and exit income.

<u>After</u> you update income or any other data in Central Intake for a client, navigate to the Program Entry page and click on the 'Edit Income' button to bring up the snapshot popup window.

Simply click on the 'Edit Income' button to take a new snapshot of the Central Intake data. For more information, see page 19 of the Program Guidelines.

Department of Commerce
Innovation is in our nature.